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ITINERATING  

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*on the* CONGO  

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MRS. HENRY RICHARDS

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# ITINERATING ON THE CONGO

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MRS. HENRY RICHARDS

Banza Manteke, Congo Free State, Africa

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*[The following graphic account of a Missionary's work on the Congo will be useful to those who purpose studying Africa.]*



O visit some of our outposts had been our desire for some time. Evangelists and teachers had with the help of their converts been working out into new districts and the call for more teachers became more and more urgent.

It was impossible to supply each village with a teacher, hence the need of a personal visit from the missionary to enable him to place to the best advantage the men who would shortly finish their course in the training school. The school had closed for a month, so that it was now convenient to make the desired journey.

A caravan, consisting only of Christian men, among whom were four deacons, was soon arranged. We knew that converts in distant districts were waiting for baptism, also that many heathen villages would be visited, therefore it was most desirable to have only Christian men.

## Starting on our Tour

On September 8th we left home and after walking three hours we reached the village of Kiaba. Most of the people in this village are church members and we received a warm welcome. The teacher was anxious for us to occupy his house, which was rather a nice one, but we found that his wife was sick, supposed to be suffering from sleeping sickness. We thanked him and declined his offer. Our tent was soon pitched, and after arranging our things for the night we chatted with the people, who were mostly old friends.

After the evening meal a bell called the people to worship, and after a bright service we had a talk with the teacher, who

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though a faithful worker, is not very brilliant. The former teacher had died and there being no one to take his place the people had chosen the best man they could get. We then retired for the night quite tired enough to enjoy a good night's rest, but were disturbed by a noise very close to us. We soon found that we should not get much rest, for in a short time we heard the grunting of pigs. So with the combined noise of pigs, goats and dogs to disturb us, we were not feeling greatly refreshed in the morning. At 7 A. M. we gathered together in the little church for the usual morning service, which lasted an hour. The people seemed to thoroughly appreciate having, "Nguan-kazi" (Mr. Richards), their white teacher, to speak to them in their own church. At 8 o'clock the school opened. We told the teacher to do as he always did, so that we could see how he managed and taught his scholars and in this way we were able to give him a few useful hints to help him in his work. Then after giving medicine to a few sick folk and wishing the people farewell, we started on our journey at 10 A. M.

Two Kiaba men joined our caravan as hammock carriers. We journeyed six hours and rested one hour before reaching Ngombe Luima, our next stopping place.

### A Kind Reception

The last few miles were very rough and hilly and daylight was fading before we climbed the last hill. We reached the town at 6.30 P. M., tired but thankful for the many acts of kindness shown to us by the people, who on hearing of our arrival rushed out of their houses to welcome us. Women and girls brought water and firewood and one woman brought out a small lamp. It being now quite dark, we took possession of the school-house for the night.

Our carriers were provided with food and shelter. After partaking of food and returning thanks to our Father above for mercies bestowed, we were not long in retiring. The noise of animals troubled us not. The night seemed far too short, but we felt quite rested in the morning.

The Ngombe teacher had left the previous day to help carry a sick man to his home in a distant town. His wife taught in the school whenever he was away; but after the early morning service, which was well attended, she asked me to take the school, as she preferred to be taught.

We had put our small traveling beds and other belongings at one end of the building, so making room for the scholars. Two

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hours were spent with them in school. The scholars were mostly young men and women, there being very few children in the town. It is only in the villages where the people have been Christians for many years that large numbers of children are seen. Nguankazi and the carriers went off in groups to visit other villages.

### **Caring for the Sick**

It seemed unwise to walk any great distance that day, so I decided to remain by the stuff. Our doctor had given me a very useful supply of medicine. When the people came telling me of their various ailments, I was able to relieve some of their aches and pains. By the time all the sick ones had been attended to the village was rather quiet, as many of the men had gone to the woods for palm nuts and material for building houses.

The women had gone to their gardens. Two heathen women were in a house and they showed very plainly that they cared nothing about their soul's welfare. One said she knew nothing about God and did not wish to know; but she listened to the story of a Saviour's love. She had often been spoken to by Christians, but her heart was still hardened.

### **Two Enterprising Lads**

Two boys, about twelve and fourteen years old, were building a house of small bamboos and grass. The walls were up and one was putting on the rafters, while the younger boy was preparing the grass for thatching the roof. For two such young builders the work was well done. We had a delightful talk together. They told me that they were saved, and they wanted to follow Jesus; but they did not know very much, so they had left their own village and were making a home there so that they could go to school and be taught.

One said, "No one loves God in our village and we were afraid we should not always be strong enough to resist all the temptations that kept coming to us, and we do want to be true Christians." The question was asked, "How about your friends there, would you not like them to be saved too?" He replied, "Yes, indeed. We do go there often and tell them about God and His Son."

The town and villages of Ngombe are situated on a fine high plateau about 1600 feet above the sea and as we stood near the side of the hill the boys pointed out the homes of the elephants



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and buffalo, that are very numerous in that part. These animals are very troublesome and dangerous in many parts. They destroy the people's gardens and eat up their food.

One day last week, Lazalo, one of our evangelists, about to return to his post at Inbangu, asked God to go before and clear the elephants out of the road.

### Candidates for Baptism

On the return of the evangelizing party, it was found that three men, who had been Christians for a long time, wished to be baptized. After dinner these men were examined and accepted for baptism. They went with us to Viaza, our next camping place, and as there were several other candidates for baptism waiting there, it was thought best to baptize them at the same time and receive them into the Viaza church.

The men who had been to the outside villages had various experiences to relate.

The people seemed determined to resist the Gospel, some scoffed, others blasphemed, and others said, "Perhaps we will consider the matter another time." They are living in sin and superstition. This is a very stronghold of Satan, yet the greater power of the glorious gospel is seen, as from time to time we hear that some have given themselves to Christ and are asking for baptism. We met men who some few years ago, when we visited Ngombe, could only scowl and keep as far away from us as possible, rejoicing in a full and free salvation.

*September 11th*, we left Ngombe and started for Viaza, where we arrived after four hours' travel. On looking around for a suitable place to put up our tent, a man who had just finished building a new house very graciously offered us the use of it. We gladly accepted his offer, as the house was much larger and cooler than the tent.

Viaza has a flourishing church and school. The teacher was very sick, but Josefi Nginga, one of the students of the training school, which had just closed, had stepped into the breach and was taking the services and teaching the school.

### A Generous Gift

By evening the women had returned from their gardens and the men from their various occupations. We received a warm welcome from all and many brought us presents of fowls, fruit and eggs.

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On making a protest against their generosity the answer came, "We know you did not come for these things, you came to see us; but we are so happy to see you that we give these to show our love." We could not hurt them by refusing to accept their gifts. The eggs given were so numerous that I trembled for their fate, as many of those given by the Ngombe folk were broken, in spite of careful packing in our cooking utensils.

At 6.30 a service of praise was held and all the people in the town attended, excepting those who were too sick to walk.

### A Beautiful Baptism

*September 12th.* After the early morning service, nine candidates for baptism were examined and accepted.

About forty-five people came for medicine.

In the afternoon a baptismal service was held in a most delightful spot under the shade of large, spreading trees close to a stream of water. One who confessed Christ in baptism was an old woman with white hair. Her face was so bright and peaceful that it was quite a pleasure to look at her. She had surprised her examiners by her intelligence and clear testimony. She knew that she was saved and other knew it, too. On returning to the town we found that the Christians had come from Mpelo, a village about three hours' journey away, and later on the Christians from Kingemba and from Ngombe arrived. Viaza was very full that night.

### A Blessed Sabbath

*September 13th.* This was a day of gladness, not one jarring note was heard to mar the harmony. The church was much too small to hold all the people who came to the services, but those who sat outside could hear just as plainly as those who were inside.

The Communion service followed the preaching and the newly baptized received the right hand of fellowship. The evening service was one of praise and worship. It is not very often that these distant places can be visited by the missionary. In their prayers the people told God that they had been spiritually hungry and thanked Him that they had been fed. They felt strengthened and helped.

It took a long time to attend to all who wanted medicine.

Some were really very sick and needed attention, while a few wanted quinine to keep fever away. Help and attention were

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given to the sick teacher, who was much better before we left. A deacon's wife, with a badly diseased arm, was made easier by having it carefully dressed each day. She and her husband were grateful for medicine and dressing which were left with them.

Monday was given up to visiting the heathen villages. Ngunkazi, carriers, deacons and all who were able went evangelizing.

I remained in the town and after attending to several patients, visiting nearly all the women left in the town and having a talk with one of our Bible women, there was time left to write a short home letter before the evangelizing party returned.

About 6.30 P. M. they began to come in, tired out, but rejoicing in having the opportunity of telling the way of salvation to those who sat in darkness.

### At Work with the Women

*September 15th.* We were up early, had a farewell service with the people, packed up our belongings and left Viaza at 9.30. After walking an hour and a half we arrived at Ngombe Makuluku, a small village of a few Christians.

We wished to spend a night there to enable us to find out whether there were few or many people living about there. Again a native house was offered to us, which we accepted. After a short rest all who were able went off to visit the people who were scattered about. After walking twenty minutes or half an hour they would find two or three houses. In this way they made known their message of divine love to many. In the afternoon many came for medicine, mostly women. Some had not seen a white woman before, therefore their curiosity was great.

They sat on the ground in front of the house and listened to the story of the Cross very attentively. They had often heard it, but many of them said that the time had not come for them to be saved.

Some of these women belonged to men who had several wives and to openly confess that they were Christians meant great trouble for them and their friends, as only the first wife is recognized by the church as the lawful wife. A man will not readily part with his women for nothing, he would want the money that he had paid for her returned and the one who had received the cloth, or money, would refuse to refund it and disputings and quarrellings would be the result.

Such quarrels are often passed down to several generations before they are settled. While speaking to these women it was



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felt that some of them were not far from the kingdom, but they were afraid to openly confess. They need our prayers.

### **The Fame of Medicine**

In the evening the Christians returned and it was very interesting to hear of their various experiences with the heathen. Some wilfully rejected the message of love, while others listened attentively, showing by their questions that they took more than a passing interest in the matter. We intended leaving very early in the morning, but just as we were ready to start we found that a number of strangers had arrived in the town.

They had heard that we were there, and their desire to see us and get medicine that would cure them of their sicknesses was stronger than their dislike to hear the gospel. The man who had charge of the medicine had already started, but he was called back, and while we were waiting for him the opportunity was taken of telling once again the way of salvation. While attending to their needs, as far as possible, the carriers were making the most of the time by talking and pleading with the people. Some of the patients evidently expected the white people to be as clever as their zinganga (fetish doctors) as they asked for medicine to accomplish some of the wonderful things that he undertakes. Surely his power is beginning to depart, when his hitherto faithful ones were asking the hated people of God for medicine. Once more we bade farewell and were leaving, when we heard shouting. Others had arrived and were asking for the doctor. We turned back and soon had the medicine unpacked. The teacher, on seeing so many people, exclaimed. "Where have you all come from? We never see you." They hid themselves in the woods so that they should not be troubled by the teachers. The fame of the medicine and their curiosity to see the white people, however, brought them out. We trust that the seed sown that morning may bring forth much fruit.

Again we started on our journey and after traveling over a very stony road for three hours we rested in a shady spot near a wood and took lunch.

### **Four Days At Nionga**

When about an hour from Nionga we passed through a small forest of palm trees. I had never seen so many palms together, nor more beautiful, and the walk through them was very enjoyable after the glare of the road. At 4.30 we reached Nionga, a small village of thirty Christians, who with their teachers are

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trying to increase their number by carrying the gospel to those who are still trusting in their charms and fetishes. Four days were spent in this village.

Assistance was given in the school, the sick received attention and services were held twice a day. Eight converts confessed Christ in baptism and on Sunday were received into church fellowship. The Christians came from Kiandu, a village two hours' away, to attend the Communion service.

One man who was working on the railway at Songololo, five hours' journey, on hearing that Nguankazi was at Nionga, started very early in the morning and arrived in time for the service. He had not had an opportunity of attending a communion service for a long time and thought nothing of the long walk to have the joy and privilege of sitting at the Lord's table. He left directly after the service was over as he had to be back at his post by night.

### The Little Slave Girl

A girl about thirteen years old, the daughter of a slave, whose heart had been changed, was anxious to be baptized, but the man who owned her told her father to take her from the Christians and keep her in his home and not allow her to return to them. In spite of threats the girl asked for baptism and was accepted. Her father attended the baptismal service, but instead of trying to prevent his daughter's immersion he quietly watched the proceedings. His master, on hearing that his wishes had been disregarded, became very angry and went to the state chief to complain of both father and daughter. The state chief lives at Kiandu.

Nguankazi had left early in the morning to visit that village and on arriving there he found the chief, slave owner, and several head men discussing the case. He joined them, and after talking the matter over with them and explaining that times had changed and that slavery was now a thing of the past, they quieted down. In a little while they were listening to the old, old Story of Jesus and His Love.

One man professed conversion through the words spoken at that time. The would-be slave owner decided to withdraw the charge against the girl.

All the villages in the Nionga district were visited. It was found that many were quite near to the Kingdom but they, like one of old, were not prepared to give up something for Christ.

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### **The Hospitality of Christians**

The Nionga Christians were very hospitable. They did much for our comfort and for the comfort of our men. They objected to our buying food for our carriers and said, "It is our pleasure to provide food for your carriers while you remain with us." But we bought a good supply of kuanga and peanuts before leaving, as we knew it would be a long time before we should meet with such hospitality again. Our halting places for the next few days would be in heathen villages and we knew from experience that it was quite possible for the people to refuse to have any dealings with us.

From Nionga we went to Kisua, a journey of twelve miles, where we found a group of villages. On entering the first village the women rushed away in the grass and remained there until we had left. Two men were sitting by a stream of water which we had crossed, so we rested under the shade of the trees and had a long talk with them. They seemed anxious for us to go on to the mbanza, or town where the chief lived. We left them and passed through another village, where we met the chief.

On hearing that we wished to spend a night in that part, he very graciously invited us to put up our tent near his compound. When we arrived there, we found a nice shady place to camp in, but a very dirty town. The women would not have anything to do with us and on our attempting to go near them they fled. Thinking it best to take no notice of them, we pitched our tent, arranged our camp, and prepared dinner. Curiosity is a wonderful thing! Pausing in our preparations to glance round, we found that the women had drawn nearer and were sitting in a group watching us. They sat there all the time we were eating and gradually the strained look in some of their faces gave place to laughter.

They were greatly amused at something they saw, perhaps at the sight of a woman sitting and eating with her husband. It is not the rule in Congoland for wives to dine with their husbands.

In the evening we walked through the town and stood at some of the open doors and spoke to them, but only one woman answered or spoke to us, and she seemed very bitter against God and everyone else. She told us that she had lost her children and she knew God, but He cared nothing about her.

When the people were all at home, short, bright services were held in different parts of the town. Several doors were opened and those who preferred to keep their doors securely fastened against evil spirits could not help hearing of a Saviour's love.

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An evangelist has since been appointed to this district and already we hear that some have left their idols and turned to God.

### Superstition at Kingombe

Next morning we left Kisua, and after walking an hour we arrived at Kingombe, a small village of twenty houses. Directly white faces were seen the women fled with their children into the grass. Some of the men came and chatted with our carriers and on finding that we were "Antu a Nzambi" (people of God) and not "Bula Matadi" (state people), they became more friendly. One man had a very bad ulcer on his foot and was anxious to have something to make it well. He had heard of the missionary's medicine and as his own native doctor had failed to cure him he thought he would give us a trial. The sore foot was dressed and medicine was left with him. On offering him medicine to take internally, he laughed and refused, saying, "I could not drink your medicine, but I don't mind putting it outside."

The people here were very superstitious; they knew little about God and less about God's Son. This village is now in the care of the Kisua evangelist and in a little while the people will not be able to say, "We do not know Jesus. Who is He?"

### A Perilous Crossing

We left Kingombe, and after walking thirty minutes we came to the Kuilu river, which we had to cross by a suspension bridge made of rattan and other vines that grow in the woods. It was falsehood to trees growing on the banks of the river, about twelve feet from the ground. It hung down in the centre like a swing. The way to the top of the bridge was three poles tied together, not very firmly, placed almost perpendicular from the ground, and a string tied on each side to assist in climbing. The carriers put down their loads and they and we sat and gazed up at this wonderful bridge. Our guide, who had been that way before, was the first to cross. The others declared that it was impossible. They were going back to Mbanza Manteke. The guide kept shouting at the men to follow him and they shouted back, "How can we come and leave our teachers?" Nguankazi then went across to see what it was like and returned for me. He sat on the bridge waiting until I could sum up courage to climb those poles. Again the guide shouted, "Do you intend to stay there all day?" Some of the men then went over. Others said, "We cannot leave mama." That of course was only an



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excuse, but it was just the thing that was needed to give me the necessary courage. I took hold of the strings, commenced to climb, and although the poles turned round under my feet, I managed to reach the top. On going a few steps on the bridge, I felt my feet slipping through the strings when Nguankazi suggested that I had better sit down. I took his advice and my head and feet felt steadier. In this position I dragged myself across. Those who had already crossed came forward to assist me in descending the poles on the other side, and as I reached the ground there was a shout of "Thank God!" in which I heartily joined. Thinking the others would follow, we were starting on our journey again, when one of the men said to Nguankazi, "If you go on, the others will return home." He waited until every man had crossed the river.

Our guide and some of the braver men were persuaded to go back and carry over the loads of those who were really too much afraid to make an attempt to walk on the bridge. They not only carried their loads, but coaxed, laughed at and scolded them until they were forced on to the bridge and made to go over.

The Kuilu is a large, swift river and the home of many alligators. The bridge was high up from the water, and probably less than two feet wide. When on the other side we all felt very brave, but had no intention of returning by that way. We then pressed on as time was passing. An hour had been spent in crossing the river. After walking forty minutes we came to the village of Vala. Many of the people were away, but some old men were friendly. The women had disappeared. The place seemed strangely quiet and on making enquiry a man said the Roman Catholics had demanded their children for their school and they had unwillingly given them up. The people are living in superstition and witchcraft. They know nothing of One who is seeking to save. We could only stay a short time there, as we had arranged to camp for the night at Nkalanga, where we expected to meet Lazalo, one of our native pastors, who was returning to a new outpost about five days from the station. A walk of an hour and twenty minutes brought us to Nkalanga.

### A Chief with Seven Wives

Lazalo and his helpers were there. Having traveled this way several times before, the people are now quite friendly with them. They had given them shelter for the night. On our arrival the chief man of the place offered us a very decent house,



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which we accepted. Nkalanga is a very small village of twelve houses, the homes of twelve adults, three men, nine women and a few small children. The chief, or rich man, is the happy (?) possessor of seven wives. He, no doubt, found it necessary to form a little village of his own. The other two men were relatives; one had two wives and the other was still a young bachelor. The husband of many wives said that he did not wish to become a Christian; he drank his malavu (palm wine), had his wives and when two girls for whom he was paying cloth were old enough, he would have two more. He would not give up his wives, or his malavu, as some other men had done on becoming followers of Christ.

We asked if his wives never quarrelled. He said, "Yes, they often quarrel and give me a great deal of trouble, but when it gets too bad I take my gun and go off hunting or visit my friends for a few days. When I return peace reigns. My women are glad to see me."

Although none of the people attended our evening service, they were all spoken to.

### Climbing the Mountains

It had been a very hot day and all were glad to retire early. An idol, fastened to the wall of the house near our beds, failed to disturb our rest. Next morning we left Nkalanga at 7 o'clock and continued our journey up country in the direction of the "Massif du Bangu." At noon we crossed the Lukunga river. On our way we passed through three villages and according to our rule we proclaimed to them Jesus. It was late in the afternoon when we reached Luwozi, at the foot of Bangu.

The Bangu has the appearance of land thrown sheer up from 2,000 to 3,000 feet from the lowland and looks very much like a high cliff seen from the sea. For many miles there are only a few places where it is at all possible to climb.

We decided to camp for the night at Luwozi and climb the mountain in the early morning. The people were quite friendly and did not run away as they did in some other places. This is quite a new village. The people had recently come down from Bangu to make gardens, in order to escape the numerous wild pigs and antelope that destroy their crops. We talked with most of the people, who seemed interested in the gospel. In the morning we began our climbing.

At first the ascent was rather gradual; but it became more and more steep and dangerous. We climbed over rocks, where a slip

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meant instant death. Some time before two natives, who were used to the path, slipped and were killed. We were all thankful that we reached the top in safety. After a short rest we proceeded on our way.

### A Mother's Sorrow

The top, instead of being a plain as we imagined, was very mountainous and we were soon climbing steep hills and almost sliding down deep gorges and crossing swift, sparkling streams. The way was very rough and called forth a few remarks from some of the men such as, "Why did Lazalo come to such a country as this? It is like another world." At last we reached Kintumba, where we received a friendly reception from the people and Ngudia Nkama, the chief. Not long before, one of the head men who had died said to the chief and people, "If teachers of God come here you must receive them." This accounts for the friendly reception given to us. At one time Ngudia Nkama was considered quite a big chief over a populous district, but so many of his people were either killed for witchcraft, or died from other causes, that his kingdom is now rather limited. In fact we heard that some of his people had suggested that he was Ndoki (one with an evil eye) and caused the death of his people. They said, "How is it that he an old man lives on while so many of the young people die?" It seemed as if the Lord had gone before and prepared the way. One woman, on finding that although white, I was really a woman and a mother, said, "Then you can understand my troubles. I have lost four children. When the first died nothing was said, but when the second one died I was accused of being Ndoki. Then the third child died when only a few days old and the people were very angry with me. They said that I had eaten the life out of my baby. I saw great anguish and wanted my baby to live. I loved it. Tell me, white woman, do you believe me?" On being assured that her word was believed, she continued: "The fourth child died, and that was taken as proof that I had killed them all. Then my husband died and I was very sad and thought, 'now I shall be killed,' but for some reason my life was spared. I now belong to another man, but my heart is still sad. I think of my children."

### Is It Really True

As simply as possible she was told of the loving invitation given to the weary and heavy laden and of the promised rest. She said,

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"Lazalo has told me about God and Jesus, and about being saved. Is it really all true? You people of God pray and I would like to pray, too, but to whom shall I speak? Shall I speak out loud? I will ask God to forgive my sins. Will He hear me?" The dear woman was earnestly seeking light and as the way was made clear she seemed to grasp the meaning of being born again.

The darkness was disappearing and the True Light was revealing Himself to her. She found rest and peace. She visited me in our tent and on my showing her the picture of our own dear girls, her amazement was great on learning that they were not with us at Banza Manteke, but were in our own country. She held the photograph in her hand, not upside down as many of the natives do, and looked at them a long time in silence and then exclaimed, "They are beautiful. How could you leave them." On hearing the reason why we had left them, she struck her hands together and could say no more. We have since heard that she and others are still trying to serve God faithfully. After enjoying the bracing climate, which reminded us of our own native air, we began the descent of the Bangu on the east side, although not so rocky, was almost as difficult as the ascent on the west.

### Bargain Day

Lazalo and Filipo remained to carry on the good work they had begun. Thirty minutes' walk from the foot of Bangu brought us to the village of Kimpeti, where we found a group of women with large baskets of peanuts and kuanga for sale. Our men had been on short ration for three or four days, as native food was scarce on Bangu at that season, so we were all glad to see those baskets of food. The men had a lively time with the women, who asked an exorbitant price for their peanuts. At last, after much shouting and ironical laughter they were brought to reasonable terms, the men took the peanuts and kuanga while the women received a fair price in francs.

On hearing a conversation between Nguankazi and some of the people, a man began to shout and make a great noise, jeering at the name of God and trying to prevent his friends from listening to the words of Life. Finding that his shouting and noise failed to have the desired effect, he became quiet and said, "We do not want to hear about those things. I thought if I made a great noise you would be frightened and go away." Poor man! He had yet to learn that such behavior called forth pity, instead of fear, and proved his great need of a Saviour.

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As we were leaving, a woman brought some eggs to buy medicine to cure her of rheumatism. We gave her the medicine and then pressed on, as we had a long walk before us to our next camping place.

### The Work of the Catholics

At 5 P. M. we reached Kimpesi. The road took us past the gardens of the Roman Catholic Mission, where a great many boys were working. When they heard that we were from the Mission at Banza Manteke they screamed and shouted at us. The men said, "These young boys are cursing us." We distinguished a few things they said, such as, "You are deceivers, going about teaching lies. You are very wicked people!" We thought that the teaching of the Catholics could not be very good if it taught young children to use such abusive language and to act as their boarding school children were acting. None of the men knew the road to the Kimpesi villages, so we decided to camp at the railway station before dark. In the morning the villages were visited and some few Christians, members of the Lukunga Church, were anxious to have a teacher. They said, "The teacher we had was driven away by Nzambi Pelo (Roman Catholics) and now we have no one to teach us." They were very glad when told that another teacher would be sent to them. Before leaving the station, while the men were taking down the tent and preparing for another journey, the opportunity was taken of speaking to a group of women, who had come to sell food to the workmen. One had once professed conversion, but had gone back. Two others said they would like to be taught, and the rest listened to the words spoken and seemed interested. Most of them had heard the gospel, but they need to hear it over and over again before they understand it. A teacher has since been sent to them. We left Kimpesi, 160 kilometers from Matadi, at 1.30 P. M. and walked on the railway line, crossed the Kuilu again, this time not on strings, but on a strong iron bridge. On reaching kilometre 141, we left the line and went south. Twenty-five minutes' walk brought us to the town of Kiandu. There were no Christians there, but one of our evangelists had been preaching there for some time. Two days were spent with the people. The young men were friendly and asked that a teacher be sent to live in their town. They now have an evangelist and a teacher to teach them and to visit other towns and villages in that part. Leaving Kiandu, we returned to the railway and walked to Malanga station, kilometre 136, where we took



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train to Nsongololo, kilometre 96. The carriers continued the journey on foot. Arriving at Nsongololo we met a Banza Manteke man who told us he had been waiting there some days. Miss Cole had sent a supply of provisions, which were very acceptable, as our box containing the food had become woefully light. We had been glad to share the men's kuanga.

### **The Home Mail**

On reaching our outpost, about half an hour from the station, we not only found provisions and oranges, but on opening the bag the first thing we saw was our home mail. Seeing we had nothing with us and knowing that our men could not be in before night, the teacher gave up his house to us, brought a table, two plates, knives, cups and spoons, which he had borrowed from different people. The young man from Banza Manteke boiled water for tea and cooked eggs, while we commenced with our letters.

We were hungry and the family loaf of bread and large cake, the latter sent by Dr. Mabie, were greatly reduced in size when we had finished.

Reading those dear home letters, which brought the good news of the recovery of one of our dear girls from a serious illness, made us forget that we were tired and that the way had been rough. After a short rest Nguankazi, with the teacher, visited two heathen villages a short distance away.

### **Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

At 7.30 P. M. our men began to arrive and by 8.30 all but three had come in. They had walked nearly thirty miles and were glad to rest. In a short time, while sitting round the fire eating their supper, they were chatting and laughing as only natives can after a hard day. The next morning nine converts, who had given proof that they were true followers of Christ, were examined and baptized. Several heathen attended the service and witnessed the ordinance. In the afternoon those baptized received the right hand of fellowship and sat at the Lord's table.

### **A Little Waif**

Fuki, a boy of about twelve years, a waif without home or friends, had found his way to this village. No one seemed to know anything about him, or where he came from. He was al-



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lowed to stay and the people were kind to him and gave him food and shelter. He had previously been greatly neglected and was like a living skeleton. The teacher said he was suffering from sleeping sickness. He had been with them some months and had learned to know Jesus as his Saviour. When he first spoke of being baptized he was told that he could not be, because he had such a bad body. He was not to be put off and presented himself for examination when he heard that others were being examined. His poor little pinched face brightened wonderfully when giving his testimony. He said he knew he was saved and that he should go to be with Jesus when he died, but he would like to be baptized first.

On hearing of his death, a short time since, we rejoiced to think that his wish had been granted.

### A Happy Sunday with Christians

*Saturday, Oct. 3d.* Before leaving Nsongololo we sent the messenger back to the mission station with a letter telling of our welfare and time of returning. A walk of an hour and a half brought us to Ntuntuambua. Many of the people here have been Christians for several years and before we reached the village they came running down the hill and shouting out their greetings of welcome. What a contrast between heathen and Christians! Here we enjoyed Sunday with the people and five converts were baptized. Two came from a distance of two hours, and one was lame and had to be carried. Many unconverted people attended the service by the water and witnessed the immersion. In the afternoon a Communion Service was held with the newly baptized. Between the services many came for medicine.

Leaving Ntuntuambua, we again took to the railway line, kilometre 88, and walked to Luvu station, kilo 80.

### A Modern Paul

Paul, the young man in charge of this station and telephone, is a member of our church and on our arrival he informed us that there were three men working there who were waiting for baptism. They were from Diadia, a town that we purposed, if possible, to reach that day. During the intervals between the trains a service was held, the men examined and immersed in the Luvu river, a mile away, and afterwards had the privilege of sitting at the Lord's table. Paul and other Christians who were working with him greatly enjoyed our visit. He said, "It is good to hear

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God's Word explained. I do not know very much, but after our work is finished we meet together and I try to teach the others." After spending four hours with them we started for Diadia, where we arrived at sundown.

Mafiote the evangelist and Joshua, a deacon from Bete, who with others had opened up this and other towns in the district, were there to meet us.

### **A New Christian Town**

The people were scattered and living in hamlets very wide apart; but since they have become Christians they have decided to come together and were already building a new town on a fine plateau. The report had gone abroad that the white teachers had arrived and in the morning many people came to welcome us.

### **Reports of the Witch Doctors**

After service the examination of candidates for baptism began. Ten gave good evidence of a new life and were accepted. These were the first Christians baptized in this district. There are many false reports spread by the witch doctors and others with regard to baptism. Some say they are choked while under water, others, that every one who is baptized must pay a certain number of people to the white teachers. By paying they mean bewitching people so that they die and after death become slaves in the white man's country. We walked an hour to a stream of water and a crowd of people went with us to witness the ordinance. Those immersed were young men. Several women who professed to be Christians found it hard to entirely overcome their superstitious fears of baptism. They wanted to see others baptized first.

Many are losing faith in their fetishes and are turning to God.

Our next journey was to Kiemba, where more people were waiting for baptism.

The road was very hilly, rough and strong and it took two hours and twenty minutes hard toiling to cover the distance. On our arrival we found a large piece of ground cleared of grass, and the people busily engaged in building houses. They, too, had decided to come together and build a town to enable them to enjoy the benefit of a teacher. They received us gladly. Many professed conversion, but only eight were accepted for baptism. Polygamy and palm wine drinking are having a hard time for existence.

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### **Total Abstinence**

The rule of the Church is total abstinence from all native and foreign intoxicants. Some find this a stumbling block, but these and all heathen customs must be given up in order to keep the line distinct between the Church and the world.

Among those baptized were four women who had overcome the old superstitious fear. The Diadia women were now sorry that they had not been baptized.

### **Welcomed by the Queen**

The queen, or chiefess, a woman about thirty years of age, a professing Christian, though not yet prepared for baptism, which completely cuts off from the old life, gave us a kindly welcome and sent food to our carriers. For a long period women have ruled in this part of the country. At one time they were, no doubt, very powerful according to the native idea.

The mother of the present queen lived to be an old woman and died about four years ago.

Before the Congo State was established, she exercised her tyrannical power. On special occasions, in order to show her authority, when wishing to rise from her seat, two slaves knelt, one on either side, while she with a knife in each hand resting on their backs, raised herself by pressing on the knives until they pierced the flesh. One man said she was a very great queen, she killed many people! Even now the witch doctors try to exercise their waning power.

Only a short time ago they were about to chop in pieces the legs of a woman supposed to have killed several people by witchcraft. The queen's head man at Diadia, recently baptized, interfered and saved the woman.

### **A Hearty Send-Off**

After leaving Kiemba, the people living in the outskirts came running after us to give food to our carriers and to give us a hearty send-off. The steep hills, rough road and long grass made this day's journey very difficult.

We passed through several small hamlets at Luwanda, where with few exceptions the people did their best to keep out of sight. In the front of a house we saw a row of idols, which the people ignorantly trust to defend them from all kinds of evil and to give them good success. At 3 P. M. we crossed the rail-

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way at kilo 68, and two hours good walking brought us to the Luvu again, a short distance from the station, where we turned off to camp for the night in the bush. Paul, with his little band of Christians, walked up from the station to join our evening service.

### A Rainy Day Journey

Early in the morning we left Luvu for Matombe, and a very unpleasant journey it proved to be, as rain commenced to fall soon after we left Luvu, and it did not cease until after we reached Matombe.

On the way we saw two herds of buffalo which caused some excitement, and when nearing the town a large bull came out of a wood near by and ran parallel to our path for a long distance when it disappeared in a wood. The men seemed to forget the discomfort of the rain and began to tell of their many hunting experiences.

Petelo, the Matombe teacher, was greatly concerned on seeing our wet condition, and asked which house we would like to take possession of, as we were welcome to any and all of them.

We soon changed our wet clothes, then sat by a fire to warm ourselves and drank hot tea.

In the afternoon the clouds dispersed and the sun shone as brilliantly as ever, and we soon forgot that we had been wet. This is a Christian town and everything was done for our comfort.

### Ten Baptized at Matombe

Ten candidates were baptized here and in the evening received the right hand of fellowship and sat at the Lord's table.

### In Sight of Home

*Saturday, October 10*, was our last day on the road. The carriers were up early, most of them anticipating the pleasure of reaching their homes that day.

How quickly they sped along the road! At noon we came to Bete, where we stayed for lunch. Bete is a well-kept town, as most of the people are church members. Mafote, their teacher, returned with us from Diadia, and we all had a hearty reception. Even here there were sick people who were anxious to get medicine. After supplying their wants we continued our journey

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and after two hours' walking the Banza Manteke Hills came into view, when our carriers gave a mighty shout and began to run.

They, too, felt that "there is no place like home." At 2.30 P. M. we reached the station after an absence of nearly five weeks and appreciated the glad welcome home. We thank God for His presence and blessing and for fulfilling His promise to be with us in our going out and coming in.





Woman's Baptist Foreign Missionary Society  
Tremont Temple, Boston, Mass.